

**The Vanguard 1934 & Workers Vanguard 1955-1967 – “The Woman Question”**  
**Journal articles -- Part1 1 & 2 (selection)**

**1934** (Retrospective, from “The Vanguard”)

Vol. 2 No. 3: Eaton’s Wage-Slaves Strike (while ILGWU “girls” paid 15 cents for a \$5 silk blouse)

**1956**

Vol. 1 No. 4: Think it over (Home & School attack on working mothers), by L. Marsh  
Vol. 1 No. 8: Think it over (G.-G. Massey’s advice to women) by Ellen Martin

**1957**

#19: Column: Think it over (the Women question) by Mary Hughes

**1958**

#30: Column: Think it over (Working women) by Mary Walter

**1959**

#42: Think it over (shopping by need instead of being deceived) by Jean Mandzie

#43: *Women (in Trade union leadership – Trade Union Notes)*

#45: *4,000 Winnipeg citizens appeal deportation of woman and child*

#45: *Photo: Doukhobor children reunited with parents*

#48: *Photo: Aino Pirskanen acquires Canadian citizenship after 1-year fight*

**1960**

#56: *“Pornography and the law,” by Drs. Eberhard & Kronhausen (review)*

**1961**

#68: Column: Think it over (On abortion) by Ruth Paul

**1962**

#75: Think it over (“Just give us a chance, boys!” (women in the NDP) by Ruth Paul

#78: The stories of three women (victims of drugs; suicide of Marilyn Monroe (Reed)

**1963**

#83: *Castro’s speech to Women’s Conference*

#83: Photo: Women 50% of medical students in Cuba

#86: *The Ontario law and profits (Women’s minimum salary)*

#86: Think it over: (How to beat the system -- Welfare recipients) by Ruth Paul

#87: Column: Thinking it over (On the birth of our baby) by Ruth Mitchell

**1964**

#97: *Algerian woman seeks Canadian help*

#98: (NDP activist) Dorothy Steeves on Cuba visit (her views broadcast) #98: *Women packers struggle against starvation wages*

#102: *The scandal of poverty in Canada (Ont. Federation of Labour statement)*

**1965**

#110: Raising the roof on housing, by Patricia Mitchell

#115: *Deep, wide poverty in affluent society – Canadian way of life, by RD; Searching for food scraps at the Montreal market*

**1966**

#116 Column: Think it over (They want the whole of you) (Jobs), by Pat Mitchell

#123: *Shoppers protest gouging; Douglas bares government fraud, by P. Kent*



IN THIS ISSUE:

# Manifesto of the Workers' Party of Canada

WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

# THE VANGUARD

VOL. 2, ISSUE No. 3

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER, 1934,

5 CENTS PER COPY

## Eaton's Wage-Slaves Strike

The facts set forth in the letter below constitute a double indictment — of the department store barons of Eaton's and of the labor skates who are running the ILGWU. A huge concern, whose directors are pillars of Toronto society, whose founder has as a memorial one of the most fashionable churches in the city, runs one of the country's most notorious sweat shops. It grinds its girl workers until in sheer desperation they organize and one department walks out. And what happens? The Union, in handling the strike shows an indifference and timidity that makes even the rawest workers sick with disgust. The ILGWU is presented with an opportunity to take a healthy crack at one of the biggest open shops in the country, and business agent Greisman acts as if the girls were running a garden party. Since the extent of the tie-up at the production end is so small it is all the more necessary to attack the company from the sales end. And what do we find? Half-hearted picketting is carried on; and after the strike has been in progress a month a mass meeting is held. No wonder the girls ask despairingly "What is to be done?"

Fullest possible publicity is the prime need of the strike. The city press has, of course, been as silent as the tomb. The reason for this is to be found in its back pages. "Sweetheart, we need each other" is the never-ending love song of the big dailies and the great department stores. The fact that, since the strike began, Eaton's has increased its advertising suggests both that Joe Atkinson, the estate of John Beverley Robinson and the others are getting a bit of extra sweetening, and that the strike publicity, feeble tho it has been, has not been entirely without effect on the firm's sales.

Mass picketting, leaflets, mass meetings, demonstrations, and parades — these are the weapons to be utilized to their fullest advantage. And if they are not used the responsibility for the failure of the strike will lie with the stuffed shirts at the head of the union. — Editors

Many people think the days of slavery ended long ago. Let me enlighten you on this point. There are hundreds of men and women slaving today for starvation wages. I myself have seen girls go into work in the morning bright and cheery and come out at night tired and haggard women, weighted

down with fear because they have not made the stipulated sum of money for that day. If they don't make \$2.50 per day they are asked why they couldn't. Why! Does the company think that if a girl could make \$12.50 per week she would be content to go home with only \$6.00? That is the wage some of the girls are taking home with them.

How would you like to sit down and make a satin blouse for 15 cents? This is no exaggeration. When the blouse is all made up and you consider the cost of the material, thread, electricity and other small details the blouse has cost the department about \$2.00. This same blouse sells for \$5.00 in the store. 9 cents is the amount the operator receives for a cotton housedress that sells in the store for \$1.98.

The girls objected to these prices and approached the manager. They were raised for a month but when the fall styles came thru the prices were lower than ever. The girls were given voile afternoon dresses to make for \$1.35 a dozen. This caused the girls to again approach the manager but this time they were told that they would either take work at these prices or else their services would no longer be required. Another grievance among the girls is a new machine that roars so loudly that it is impossible to talk above it and the vibration from it is nerve racking. This noise is due to the machine being improperly installed. When the girls went to the boss about it he refused to do anything, saying that its adjustment would cost \$6.00. The girls began to think that the noise was caused deliberately so that they couldn't talk to each other about conditions.

The girls struck and have been out for the past month. They have carried signs in front of the factory and surrounding places. The International Ladies' Garment Workers Union to which they belong seem, to want to compromise. For the first two weeks they would not allow the girls to picket the store. Now they will not allow them to use what they call radical methods such as mass picketting. The advertising of the strike by the Union has been entirely inadequate. Due to the inability of the Union to treat this matter as a strike and not as a Sunday School picnic almost no progress is being made. The one-time strike has now virtually developed into a lockout. What is to be done?

T. Eaton Striker



# Think It Over

by Lou Marsh



I went to a Home and School meeting last night. I go to them because I know that it's a good idea for parents and teachers to get together, but I often feel that the meetings are rather unrealistic. The speakers are usually ministers, professional people, or up-and-coming businessmen—persons who don't have much understanding of the problem working class parents face in bringing up children.

Last night for instance, the speaker spoke on **The Duties of the Home**. A large part of his speech was devoted to an attack on working mothers. That's what it was—an attack. He did concede that some parents had to work but generally he felt that sacrifices could and should be made in order to keep the mother in the home.

People like this make me fed up with their talk of sacrifice. What do they know about sacrifice with their \$25,000 homes and 1956 cars? Why should working people have to sacrifice things like decent housing and the recreation a TV set or a car gives them in order to keep the mother at home? Surely in a country that has the second highest standard of living in the world a man should be able to earn enough to feed, house and clothe his family adequately and still have money over for recreational purposes.

But this isn't the case. Talk to any working mother and she'll tell you the only way she can hope to buy a home or a decent car is by her going out to work. The alternative is often slum housing, scraping and scheming to make each penny do the work of three:

Working mothers don't have to be told that their home and children aren't looked after properly when they work. They come home

after a hard day's labor to face an evening of cooking and cleaning. They know only too well that they don't spend enough time with the children and their husband. It gets pretty frustrating to work a 16-hour day and still feel the job is only being half done. Some women would enjoy working in plants and offices—meeting people, developing new skills and abilities. But when this is combined with another full-time job most of us would prefer to stay home.

A lot of mothers probably get as fed up as a woman I read about recently in the paper. She was charged with driving a truck with faulty brakes and sentenced to a week in jail or a \$10 fine. She chose the week in jail because as she said, "Going to jail will be a rest after taking care of six kids and hauling pulpwood."

This situation can be solved. If workers were given their full share of their production no mother would have to work for economic reasons. For those mothers who like working in industry there's an alternative to their 16-hour day, 7-day week.

In Sweden for example, there are co-operative apartment buildings where you can eat in a public dining room or have your meals sent up from the kitchen. There are also kitchen facilities in each apartment if you want to use them. The apartment is cleaned by a cleaning service and there is a nursery for children to stay in. These services are at prices working people can afford.

It isn't the fault of the parents if children are neglected because both father and mother work. It's the fault of a society that forces both of them to work and then fails to provide any facilities for looking after the children. It isn't the parents who need to be changed—it's the society.

## Think it Over . . . by Ellen Martin

The women's page of the Toronto Globe and Mail ran a newspaper release on June 14th that said,

### BEST WORK IS IN HOME MASSEY TELLS WOMEN

I read on to see that Governor-General Massey told the National Council of Women that women does her best work in the home. Of course he believed, too, that women have every right to accept opportunities and obligations of public service.

It reminded me of a statement by Professor Maria Castellani in Italian Women, Past and Present. She explained her allegiance to Fascism by saying, "Fascism recognizes women as a 'part of the life force,' laying down a division of duties between the two sexes without putting obstacles in the way of those women who by their intellectual gifts can reach high positions."

Mr. Massey told the council "our whole way of life is in danger" and women's qualities of order, quiet industry, devotion, humility, self-sacrifice and spiritual awareness were needed to go with the creative ability, the self-confidence, ingenuity and drive of man.

These homilies are sadly similar to Goebbels' outline in his Diary of March 29, 1932 when, in reference to a plan of propaganda for the coming political campaign, he recorded that Hitler said, "Man is the organizer of life, woman is the organ for carrying out plans."

To console women for their status as second-class citizens, mothers are sanctified, endowed with halos and blessed with "instincts"—feelings and knowledge, forever beyond the comprehension of men.

"Men may have been the most famous artists,

but women make the home a place of beauty and order; men may prove to be the greatest chefs but women nourish their families; men have discovered all about germs, but women long before that, kept the place clean; men have been the most eminent doctors, but it is women who care for and therefore cure the sick," said the governor-general.

Here, Mr. Massey shows us that men are the masters in economic, cultural, political and intellectual life while women play a subordinate role. But why?

An anthropologist, Dr. Ashley Montagu, said, "In all respects whatsoever, without exception, women are naturally superior to men. Man is stronger in his capacity to lift, push and pull but in an age when 90 per cent of the world's work is done by machines, muscle is a luxury. In all intelligence tests since 1903 (except in the mechanical brackets like aptitudes, mathematics and geometry) females have always outscored males. Why this frightful disparity in achievements? Women have never had anything like the kind of opportunities men have enjoyed. These are all scientifically corroborated facts."

Male domination has been upheld and perpetuated by the system of private property, the state, the church, and the forms of the family that serve the bosses' interests. When it suits the capitalist economy women are called from the home to release men for fighting by entering war-production plants; women are recruited to the armed forces; women are urged to join the farm-food force. Women's role can be changed to suit the needs of capitalist society. At this particular stage of history it suits the bosses, with the aid of the cultured Mr. Massey, to perpetuate the false idea of male supremacy.

# Think It Over . . . by JEAN MANDZIE

The other afternoon, I attended a meeting of a mothers' group which I belong to and listened to our guest who had been billed to speak on "Have you ever been a subject of hypnosis?"

Of course, most of the girls were sure that they hadn't, but were they in for a surprise! She spoke about shopping and developed some very interesting points; for instance, the average person is dazed by the vast display of colors and sizes of packages in supermarkets and therefore makes her choice more out of impulse than logic.

She explained that she had started to check on this problem after reading an item in *Fortune* magazine. It was about selling, and salesmen's attitudes to the customer. It pointed out that one manufacturer's executive told his sales staff that "no salesman can sell anything until he learns that the customer is the enemy"—that they must consider the buyer as their adversary!

In the battle for the buyer's dollar, no holds are barred.

"When you go into the Center (that's the big shopping plaza here in Hamilton) perhaps you aren't aware of their diabolical cunning and schemings. Why in some supermarkets they even have concealed movie cameras solely to study your reaction to various packages, to color combinations, odd shapes, etc. All of these are part of their scheme to 'chisel' us out of more of our money than we would usually spend."

She went on to point out that in 1940, there was a clerk for every \$7,000 worth of merchandise sold, but today, through the highly vaunted "freedom of choice" system, the self-service set-up, there is now only one clerk for every \$25,000 or more.

Now this has altered the manufacturer's approach to some extent, but not to soften his attempts to thwart the shopper. Oh no! On the contrary! It has meant the launching of a new campaign—that of psychological hypnosis. It has meant careful color selection in packages—you see reds, blues, greens, yellows. Rarely is brown used, it hasn't the hypnotic impact. That's the reason why trade marks have been made larger. Many containers have been enlarged or misshapen to accommodate bigger-lettered names—the insides, however, are either only three quarters full or less, or else stuffed with a "free" gift, the cost of which has already been added in the sales price.

She went on, asking the girls if they took their kiddies with them when they went shopping, and answered her own question. "Of course you do." "Well," she said, "isn't it nice of them to provide little carts for your kiddie, to push around and be mother's little helper. Now let's take a real close look at this so-called convenience. Is it really to help us housewives or is it just another 'gimmick' to push some product they want to sell."

"Oh nonsense," said one of the girls, "that's part of their customer service—their way of saying 'Thank you, come again.'"

"That's not so," she replied. She pointed out that almost without exception, the child will put in the basket item after item, all cunningly placed to catch the kiddie's eyes—and hands. "And," she challenged, "show me the mother brave enough to put them all back, disregarding the wailing and fretting of their child. No selling pressures, eh? There is no further need for clerks to push certain items. The customer was starting to become wary of them anyway."

"And the way things are displayed—not only tempting the housewife to spend her few pennies—but imagine the awful impact this overwhelming flaunting of plenty must have on such unfortunates as the old-age pensioner or a younger woman who endeavors to keep decent meals in front of her kiddies, but whose hubby may be either unemployed or only on part-time. If anyone is ever caught 'shoplifting', my goodness, can you ever hear those sanctimonious, pious shopkeepers scream for the law to put them away—out of temptation. To me it's a wonder there isn't more shoplifting."

As I passed the Center, on my way home, I stopped and wondered what it would be like to have the storekeepers as our friends, instead of looking on us as "the enemy".

Wouldn't it be nice if the supermarkets were there to display all the various types of goods that are available. If the displays were designed to help us pick those items that are most useful to us—not trick and deceive us so that people like E. P. Taylor can accumulate vast fortunes. Wouldn't it be marvellous if the supermarkets were for the people. But then we would have to have a different Canada—a Canada that was 'the peoples', and not for the people.

# Think It Over

by Mary Hughes



Listen, girls, I have something I'd like to get off my chest. Something that's sort of been rankling me for the past few days. The gentleman behind my ill humor is none other than the energetic evangelist, Billy Graham. I'm afraid that he and I just don't see eye to eye when it comes to the so-called "fair sex."

It all started last Monday. I had just finished my coffee and picked up the morning paper before starting the day's work.

As I leafed through the pages an article caught my eye. It was the summary of a speech made by Mr. Graham to a New York audience. It seems he had been talking about marriage and the DUTIES of women in the marriage relation.

First, he said, "Man must be the head of the house." Well, of all things, man as the head of the house means that the woman is the subject and inferior being. It makes the family relationship nothing short of a dictatorship, instead of a democratic unit striving for the welfare of all.

Maybe, Mr. Graham is thinking of a benevolent dictatorship, the way his home is run. Well, thanks anyway, we're not taking any chances, we still don't want our husbands dominating the roost.

After all, if any one is to be the head of the house why not the female? She is more closely tied to it and knows its problems better than the man who is at work all day.

Among Billy Graham's counsel to wives were the admonitions to "be attractive, keep up with your husband intellectually, curtail unnecessary expenditures and don't nag."

To be attractive? For whom? Obviously for our husbands. But is woman only an ornament to please man? Can she not be attractive in her own right and to please her own sense of beauty?

And what of women-keeping up intellectually with their husbands? Graham dismisses the idea that women should have mental pursuits of their own. No, says Billy, good wives must only strive to keep up to date with their husbands' interests! This will assure them the comfort of a sympathetic ear for their pet subjects.

Even if we were capable of developing our own minds, and Graham infers otherwise, such rebellious action would not become the wifely estate.

Mr. Graham says that all women are spend-thrifts. Yet figures prove that the vast majority of women are the savers of the family.

The evangelist is, in effect, saying that we can't spend a cent without our husbands' approval. We work all day at the difficult and often discouraging task of making a home and what do most of us get! Not even the right to a little spending money of our own.

Some months ago the Alberta CCF passed a resolution approving salaries for housewives. Well girls, I heartily endorse that one. They're long overdue.

What of nagging? Well, who's perfect? Reminds me of my husband when he's looking for a clean pair of socks, (in the top left drawer) a clean shirt, (right hand side of the clothes closet) or trying to find his pipe, (on top of the radio where he left it last night.) Yes, nag, nag, nag!

Well, anyway, girls, I've spoken my mind, and I'm glad. Who's going to defend our rights if we don't?

Billy Graham's ideas logically lead one to the conclusion that women are inferior to men. This is utterly false. Take it from me, Billy, we women are out for complete equality and we won't stop till we get it.

## Think it Over . . . Ruth Paul

None can know better than women the fear and prejudice surrounding the word abortion. But all the experts on this problem are men according to the *Toronto Globe and Mail* which recently published a series of seven "viewpoints"—all written by men, one of whom has taken the vow of celibacy. This writer is a woman—who knows the joys of motherhood and feels it is time a female "viewpoint" was heard.

The Criminal Code of Canada considers an abortionist a criminal who is liable to life imprisonment, and the female upon whom the abortion is performed—an accomplice who may be imprisoned for two years.

The objection to abortion by the law and its defenders is on grounds of "morality." First, it is immoral to take an innocent, helpless life; secondly, those who do so only seek to free themselves for what one of the writers has called "illicit sexual indulgence."

To equate an embryo with a human being is a distortion of the question. It is an organism of the mother which cannot exist without her. In our society it is not legally recognized as alive until well after the third month of pregnancy. When it is lost through miscarriage no funeral services are held. Human intervention in this process suddenly transforms it from an "Act of God" to a "crime".

What hypocrisy this moral view reveals when probed further. Prison for life to those who help an unmarried woman remove her "shame". Prison for life to the

unhappy doctor who helps an unemployed family avert the disaster of further offspring. But who is tried and judged when hundreds of Canadians are driven to suicide yearly because they are unemployed or just "too old" to get a job? Why was it perfectly legal to kill millions in World War II? Why is Harry Truman, who gave the word to drop the first atomic bomb and kill 73,000 women and children, still a free man?

And what does the church say in this sphere of morals? The Anglican church is opposed to change in the abortion laws. This is the same church that recently refused to take a position against nuclear arms for Canada on the grounds that it is a "technical" and not a "moral" question — arms that are being acquired for one purpose only—to kill. A Catholic contributor to the *Globe and Mail* series vigorously defends the Catholic view - no abortions for any reason—this is murder of the innocent. Why does this standard not apply to a New York Jesuit who recently said: "a man has a moral right to use violence to defend his fallout shelter after nuclear attack."?

The law's implication that a woman is a whore unless she desire a child under almost all circumstances flies in the face of facts. US statistics show that 85% of abortions there are requested by married women—the so-called "moral fibre" of the nation. Who better than married woman can appreciate the penny-pinching of unemployment, the H bomb hovering above us, contaminated atmosphere shaping

deformed babies?

On the contrary, women, in their compassion for humanity, prefer to end pregnancy before her little one can face this kind of world.

The only crime with regards to abortion is the law which prevents it—except for those rich enough to do it illegally. A "good" doctor with whom you have made "connections" requires \$300 or better, hard cash. Working women don't have \$300 cash. They go to a "quack" who may kill, along with their more than 5,000 Canadian and U.S. sisters who die annually from this cause—not to speak of the thousands permanently injured.

There is only one humane solution—legalize abortion and treat it as any other operation under medical coverage. Canadian women have the right to end unwanted pregnancies under the best of medical care, under full protection from the law, and with the knowledge that we are not being castigated as pariahs and criminals for so doing.

### Toronto BANQUET

celebrating 44 years of  
struggle for world  
Socialism

NOV. 11 \$2.00  
By reservation only. Make  
yours at once

Phone EM. 6-1454



# Think it Over . . . . . By Ruth Paul "JUST GIVE US A CHANCE, BOYS!"

"Why don't women take an interest in politics?" groaned the weary NDP canvasser as he entered the committee room. "I'm foot-sore and short-tempered after three hours of indifferent housewives. Women are so apathetic. They just don't seem to care."



"Ain't it the truth," chirped up another pious male. "I wonder why they are so indifferent to something affecting every as-

pect of their lives?"

These are typical comments I hear around the committee rooms. "What are we going to do about the apathy of the 'fairer sex'?" puzzle these males.

I suggest the first thing you do is stop talking this way. Constant denigration of the female tends to legitimize the view that she is a total loss.

Then, fellows, you'd better find out why women, by and large, are indifferent to politics.

Here's a "reason" that stubbornly persists. We women just don't have a "head for politics." We are the possessors of inborn backwardness which we will carry to our graves. Poor creatures! Rule that one out. The

latest scientific data: Women are equal to men mentally, are physically more durable than the male.

Another explanation. Women have a "built-in" apathy towards politics.

Who was ever born with apathy? If we were not born with it then it must have been learned from our surroundings and the pressures of Canadian life.

What's more, fellows, our apathy is deliberately fostered. The villain?" You probably have guessed—the free enterprise, the capitalist system which treats women as inferiors and as the property of man—and therefore incapable of profound political thought.

If this isn't true, tell me why women in Quebec have no legal rights? Why the marriage ceremony of a great social institution purporting to promote the "brotherhood of man" tells the woman to "love, honour and obey" her husband for forces her to change her name?

Why is it virtually impossible for women to become doctors or lawyers, yet the highly exploited nursing profession is wide open to them?

Why must women continually struggle under the burden of lower wages? Like the cleaning women in BC recently hired to replace men at almost \$1 per hour less. The government even admitted they did a better job. Ex-Controller Jean Newman of Toronto bewails women's lack of

interest in politics. She is a leading member of the Liberal Party. This party has done literally nothing to establish equality of women in Canadian society.

What about our party, fellows? The New Democratic Party fights for the rights of all working people. What are we doing to overcome the myth of woman's inferiority and promote her in politics?—to set an example within the party?

NDP women have not been really promoted as candidates in this election. And what are women in the NDP campaign encouraged to do? The typical "women's work"—phoning, filing, typing, sitting in committee rooms, baby sitting.

Why are "women's committees" set up in the NDP? Not as a militant group to fight for women's equality but because we women have our own "low level of interest".

Stop criticising the girls, fellows, and start doing something. Let us know that you really want us in politics.

Fight for our equality, yes, in the NDP too! Fight for an NDP program that will end discrimination against women—that is a socialist program.

One final tip. Charity begins at home. So if your wife minded the children last night so you could canvass, it's her turn out tonight. If the shock is too much for her just give her a gentle push out the door. I know she'll go.

Think it Over . . .

## THE STORIES OF THREE WOMEN

by Evelyn Reed

(Reproduced from the American Weekly, The Militant.)

On August 5 the separate fates of three women hit the headlines.

That day the body of Marilyn Monroe, famous actress-suicide, was buried at Westwood Memorial Park, Los Angeles. Alongside this news story the press announced that Dr. Frances Kelsey, mother of two daughters, who worked in the Food and Drug Administration in Washington, had been awarded the nation's highest civilian-service medal.

That same day Mrs. Sherri Finkbine, mother of four, and star of an award-winning children's TV program in Arizona, was undergoing "mental tests" in Sweden to determine whether she should be delivered by abortion of bearing a baby without arms or legs. These three women—of different ages, occupation and outlook on life—did not know one another personally. But they were linked together by their own special involvements in the physiological and psychological mutilations of our times brought about by the profit system.

Dr. Francis Kelsey

The world shuddered at the news that thalidomide, a new drug first marketed in West Ger-

many and taken by pregnant women in many other countries, had resulted in an "epidemic" of deformed babies.

It was then disclosed that for 14 months Dr. Frances Kelsey had waged a one-woman resistance against the powerful Wm. S. Merrell drug company here, blocking its mass sale of thalidomide on the American market. The Drew Pearson column on Aug. 8 hinted: "the full story hasn't been told of the pressures that the Merrell Co. brought to bear upon her."

The most shocking fact, according to another Pearson column, was that the Merrell Company "neglected to withdraw the thalidomide samples until four months after their use had been stopped in Germany . . . [It] left the thalidomide pills on the Canadian market until March 2 [nearly 4 million ten-cent pills were sold in Canada] and didn't call upon American physicians to stop their experimental use until March 23. As late as June 11, the Merrell Co. described the birth abnormalities as 'alleged effects . . . mere speculation.'"

Mrs. Sherri Finkbine

Because of delays in sounding the alarm about the drug, the news came too late for Mrs. Sherri Finkbine, over three

months pregnant with a thalidomide-threatened embryo. Learning about the danger in a newspaper article in July, she immediately applied to a Phoenix hospital for a legal abortion. She might have been granted the operation—if she had kept her mouth shut and concealed the cause of her plight.

But this public-spirited woman, realizing she had only accidentally come upon the truth about the drug, spoke out to warn other American women about the deadly peril involved in it. That outspokenness proved her undoing. The Arizona abortion was cancelled. The hound-dogs of reaction drove her to Sweden where abortions are legal.

In answer to sanctimonious adults who question the "moral ethics" of such abortions, Paul Coates in the Aug. 10 Los Angeles Times printed a letter from a woman of 50 who indignantly wrote: "Has anyone considered the child's point of view? It is the one who must suffer with operations and all the pain that accompanies them . . . the jibes of other children, the sly glances . . . 'Isn't he a freak?' . . . I am deformed and I know what I'm talking about. If I had anything to say about my birth, I certainly would have decided upon an abortion of myself without any scruples . . . So let these mothers who talk of the joy this darling bundle from heaven is bringing them, even though it has no hands or legs, put themselves in the child's place and see how they feel!"

Marilyn Monroe

Physical deformities can be seen and felt, scorned or pitied. But they are not the only injuries inflicted upon people living under capitalism. No less cruel are the unseen mutilations, the emotional agonies that don't show on the surface. When tens of millions of Marilyn Monroes's fates throughout the world grieved about her

suicide, many were identifying her hidden inner wounds with their own.

Hollywood publicity agents create false images of their box-office commodities which conceal the real characters of the individuals. Nevertheless many sensed that behind the glamor-girl was a warm-hearted, generous, sensitive person. The Aug. 3 issue of Life, presenting a last interview with Marilyn, confirmed this opinion.

"We human beings are strange creatures and still reserve the right to think for ourselves," Marilyn told the Life reporter. "Once I was supposed to be finished—that was the end of me. When Mr. Miller was on trial for contempt of Congress, a certain corporation executive said either he named names and I got him to name names, or I was finished. I said, 'I'm proud of my husband's position and I stand behind him all the way, and the court—him too.' 'Finished,' they said, 'You'll never be heard of.'"

This corporation brought the same evil pressures to bear upon Marilyn that the drug profiteers directed against Dr. Kelsey. But both women stood firm.

In her last interview Marilyn protested against those who kept trying to reduce her to a saleable commodity. ". . . This sex symbol," she said, "I always thought symbols were those things you clash together! That's the trouble, a sex symbol becomes a thing. I just hate to be a thing." She resisted as long as she could. But at 35, unable to reconcile her own needs and aspirations with the crushing demands of commerce in flesh, she succumbed.

The life-and-death struggles of the movie star, the medical official, the pregnant mother—each in its own way—reveals the enormous damage inflicted upon human beings by this money-mad society. It also reveals the heroic capacity of women to resist and protest against the mutilations.

### SPECIAL OFFER

Subscribe Now at half-price  
to the Socialist Press

Clip this coupon and mail it with 50 cents in stamps and your name and address to:

#78 Sept. 1962  
**WORKERS VANGUARD**

31 QUEEN ST. W., TORONTO



Discussing some of the problems of the implementation of the national health plan now in operation in Cuba. Prior to the revolution women were discriminated against in the medical profession. "At this moment," Castro said to the delegates to the Havana conference, "in the first course of the School of Medicine, women account for 50% of the total enrolment."



Think It Over . . .

## HOW TO BEAT THE SYSTEM

by Ruth Paul

How do you feed and clothe three small children on a mothers' allowance of \$90 a month? This was the dilemma facing Mrs. Beatrice Flom of Toronto in 1953. Being a conscientious mother she supplemented this income with a clerical job at the munificent sum of \$40 per week.

She was duly rewarded for her attempts to hold her family together. You might say she received a premature "mother's day" gift. On April 23 she was sentenced to an indefinite term in reformatory not to exceed three months for "defrauding the Ontario Public Welfare Department of \$9,500 over a ten year period".

In Regina, Mrs. Rita Hoeft, widowed mother of four, got her mother's day gift early too — two months in jail for working in a cafe while drawing mother's allowance.

Of course these women really lived it up on the money they robbed from the taxpayers' money that might have been better spent — e.g. nuclear warheads for Pear-

son's Bomarcos or germ warfare research.

Mrs. Hoeft said: "I didn't spend the money on myself; the extra money went on the kids." She had remodeled her house because it wasn't fit to live in. There were no windows, no doors, and the plaster was falling in.

Mrs. Flom, who has been tubercular for years, must have had a ball with hers — paying medical bills for her condition, not to mention the joys of outrageous rents and food costs. Even \$9,500 is too cheap a price to put on the mental anguish she has revelled in in these last ten years — raising a family alone and in poor health.

Isn't it shocking! You're jolling in the lap of luxury if you take a job at sweatshop wages to supplement the present \$150 a month Mothers' Allowance doles out. The government is on cloud nine if it thinks that \$150 per month paid in 1963, plus the few dollars earned in the 24 hours a week widows are permitted to work will support families of three and four children. Mrs. Pearson and Mrs. Dieffenbaker ought to try it sometime.

Even when she does land a job it's usually the worst paid, as Mrs. Hoeft and Flom's cases indicate. Employers won't hire women with children. After all, they may not be "reliable" on the job.

The truth is Canadian laws are designed so the sole responsibility of family care is loaded on the parents. But heaven help you if you take this responsibility seriously. Mrs. Hoeft and Mrs. Flom

can well testify what happens — from their jail cells.

The prosecution told Mrs. Hoeft that her actions made her "as guilty of crime as she would be had she robbed a bank to feed her children".

Who wouldn't steal to feed a hungry family? It would be a crime not to. These unfortunate women are not criminals. The law is criminal.

Magistrate Graham, in sentencing Mrs. Flom, had the crust to say he hoped her sentence was a "blending of justice and mercy". What a farce! The only justice and mercy will be a change in the law to increase mothers' allowance payments and also remove the necessity to slink off like a robber to some poorly paid job.

What of the future for Mrs. Hoeft and Flom? The government is not the least concerned over the children's welfare during their jail terms. When they are released they will have their prison records hanging over them. These will help in destroying their chances for further employment. We can only hope that these "just and merciful" sentences do not destroy their morale entirely.

If they don't give up? — they have already displayed their toughness and courage under the pressures of capitalist society — then you can bet your life they'll be one hundred percent behind those who are determined to change this archaic system.

### LEAGUE FOR ANALIST ACTION

Vancouver  
East Hastings.  
Onto  
Lucan St. W.

Subscribe Now to <sup>#86</sup> June 1963

THE WORKER'S VANGUARD

1111 BROADVIEW STREET WEST TORONTO 1, ONTARIO

\$1.00 for 12 issues, \$2.00 buys your sub and  
one for a friend

*Think It Over . . .*

**by Ruth Mitchell**

## ON THE BIRTH OF OUR BABY

For some women the process of pregnancy, birth and child-rearing is a joy, for some it's a mere duty, and for still others it is a matter of misery, worry, and constant frustration. Many people would write off this difference in attitudes among women by saying that nature has simply cut some women out to be better mothers than others. After spending a few weeks in a large maternity ward, though, I would say—No. Most women can enjoy children and the bearing of them. It is just that our society makes motherhood pretty rough on some of us.

Pregnancy makes some women nauseate, some fat, and gives others varicose veins and ugly stretch marks. Some women have a hard time, while others seem to breeze through their pregnancies. All this can vary. But all pregnant women are anxious about the child they are carrying. The question "Will it be normal?" haunts many a mother through pregnancy, and often the most urgent question in her mind after that is "How can we afford this baby?"

The grim mood of depression and fear which haunts a pregnant woman whose husband is unemployed or who is already badly in debt robs many a mother of her instinctive feeling of hope and loving expectation, turns countless pregnancies into hateful and dreaded chores.

You can't afford to eat the proper food. The vitamin pills you got on sale somehow look inferior to the shiny bottles of essential supplements which wealthier women can afford to spend up to \$15 a month on. You have to keep working up to the last minute, and your aching legs and back aside, you are sure that all the bending, lifting and climbing of

stairs is not good for you or the baby. And all this that the experts say about a nap every afternoon and eight hours sleep each night! Easier said than done when you have other young children or when you work a 40 hour week. But maybe it would be better if this baby didn't survive the pregnancy after all. Because getting it born is really only a small part of the problem.

How are you going to feed the new baby properly? Keep him warm this winter? Pay the extra heat and light bills? Find room for him? Then he'll want toys and other things you can't afford to give him. You visualize the endless demands he'll make that you know you will never be able to satisfy.

Our society makes loving babies unreservedly and without fear, as they should be loved, a luxury never to be enjoyed by the many who live with poverty. And there are still other anxieties.

We only have Medicare in one province in Canada, and it seems to me that Saskatchewan would be the only place where someone like myself, who doesn't have much money, could feel at all secure having a baby. For example, it was only by a piece of good luck that I happened to have about \$20 extra dollars on hand to invest in a private medical plan this year. But even the plan that I got didn't cover drugs, and it went so far as to specifically prohibit my going to an obstetrician.

Of course, it might be argued that most pregnant women don't need that many drugs, and also that a good general practitioner can handle most pregnancies. But what if the pregnancy is not "normal"? And even if it is, why should

some people be expected to be satisfied with less than the best of medical attention?

And drugs — because of the Thalidomide scare, there has been a lot of talk these days about how women should not take pills at all during pregnancy, and many doctors say that problems like nausea and sleeplessness are all in our minds anyway, and should just be ignored. But I've seen girls who have had to stay in hospital for weeks fighting a stubborn case of "morning sickness" (which can also be noon and night sickness) and it's easy to say "ignore it" if you don't have to go to work every day or look after other children.

The big drug companies play a deadly game with pregnant women. Not only do they fail to test their drugs properly, exposing the expectant mother to danger herself or to the heartbreak of bearing a deformed child, but they make the cost of the drugs which she needs prohibitive. I would not be able to call any Medicare plan really complete myself, until I was sure that these companies were brought under public ownership.

Some women may fear the birth of a baby, some may anticipate the event, and some may hate the very thought of it. But one thing is sure, and that is that no woman can be indifferent to the child she is carrying. As the baby grows stronger and more active inside her, her concern and anxiety for it grows greater and more intense. Surely it is one of capitalism's most cruel tricks that the women of the class which built and sustain it have to suffer such needless and agonizing worries in what should be the happiest time of their lives.

# RAISING the ROOF on HOUSING

By Patricia Mitchell

Candidate for Toronto Board of Control 1964

Well — it's finally been said so that no one can help but hear — Toronto's civic officials not only don't do anything to fight slums — in fact, they help create them!

You know, last year when I ran for Board of Control, I would sit in the election meetings, listening to the other speakers and watching the audience reactions. They came because they were upset about many things — but housing in particular. And they often left more confused than they came, because they heard one Tory or Liberal hack after another voice his opposition to slums and yet we still have them. It was impossible to reconcile the statements of the politicians with the reality. Ross Dowson, who ran for mayor on a labor program, and I, pointed out that the mortgage and real estate interests who dominate city hall see to it that almost no low rental housing is built, but it was difficult to get our message across, with the press, of course, backing us out.

Alderman June Marks has succeeded in getting some excellent publicity about the connivance of city officials with slum landlords. Documents filed by her with the city council recently included letters from tenants telling of rats crawling out of toilet bowls, and sitting in babies' cribs, of cockroaches and mice, of defective wiring and even no electricity for a period of three weeks, of blocked drains and flooded basements in which whole families are living, of families sleeping in the furnace room, of leaking roofs, and no fire escapes, of garbage filled apartments and backyards, and boarded up windows — these are the welfare department's only facilities for persons on welfare who desperately need accommodation.

Alderman Marks, in a speech to an NDP meeting a few weeks ago, (she's a Liberal) exposed slum conditions, and charged that speculators were deliberately destroying residential areas by overcrowding buildings, refusing to repair them, and putting in "undesirable" tenants in order to pressure homeowners to sell cheaply. She charged that the welfare department cooperated with the speculators in providing tenants for the substandard housing and that the building inspectors failed to enforce the by-laws on these properties while harassing resident homeowners in the area.

Members of city council were infuriated by her speech. They demanded she document her charges and one alderman threatened her with civil action if she didn't prove her charges. They hoped that they could intimidate her into backing down. But, surprisingly, she didn't. Instead she and several students worked night and day to collect the documentary evidence they challenged her to produce.

Confronted with the documents, the Mayor directed the city solicitor to determine the need for a judicial inquiry. But I see today that they have decided no such inquiry is needed. But surely such an inquiry would convict or clear city officials of Mrs. Marks' charges. I can only conclude that their refusal to institute an inquiry indicates that it would prove her charges to be correct.

And then they passed a by-law giving the Building Department greater authority for determining standards of fitness of human habitation. However since this is one of the departments that has been charged with being in cahoots with the speculators — this bylaw is for laughs. To top all this off — the police had the gall to question for an hour, two of the students who were helping Mrs. Marks obtain her information, ostensibly because they had had a complaint that the students were impersonating a building inspector.

The underlying problem is obviously the shortage of subsidized housing. There are only 4,800 public housing units and 3,480 families on the waiting list. The reason for that is clear.

As Mrs. Marks said on May 10 "In this money-mad crazy town of ours, a developer might as well be our co-ordinator." Or Ken Soble, chairman of the Ontario Housing Corporation. The reason people don't holler about [subsidization of] education and hospitalization is because they are generally not money-making propositions. "But they do make money out of substandard and run-down housing and these landlords threaten municipal councils." Or former Alderman May Birchard when she walked out of a sub-committee of the city council responsible for housing two years ago with the statement that she was fed up with it as it was "a do-nothing body." She charged it with being subservient to influential land speculators, developers and contractors who "hate public housing here in Toronto." She said she didn't think council members were dishonest "but I don't think this committee realizes how it is being influenced." It is inevitable city council members are influenced by big business interests because they spend so much time with them, she said.

May Birchard had been an alderman since 1946 and a Liberal. But because of her outspoken views on housing she was dumped by the Liberals at the next election. What will happen to June Marks who is also a Liberal? Mrs. Marks has performed a very useful service, but the only way she can do more than expose those who maintain the slums of Toronto is by seeking allies in the labor movement and the NDP. And surely once again but more clearly than ever this whole episode shows the urgent, drastic, need for a civic administration that is not allied to the real estate interests but one that represents the working people.



Think it over

by Patricia Mitchell

# THEY WANT THE WHOLE YOU

For the first time in several years, I'm job hunting, or as an old IWW friend of mine used to say, "I'm a slave looking for a new master." And that pretty well hits the nail on the head. Since you're hired to work, you might expect that all they'd want to know was your typing speed, but there's a lot more to getting a job than that. They're not just buying your skills—they're buying your background, your education, your relatives, your sex appeal, your attitudes—the whole you.

Questions on application forms have asked the occupations of my whole family, including my brothers and sisters, the number of children I have, my day-care arrangements for them, three references and their occupations, and why I left previous jobs. And they sure aren't slow to let you know, subtly of course, what they want from you. One personnel woman commented on hearing my address, "People sometimes live in the oddest places," and then added that one of the advantages to working for this firm was the fine people with whom you were associated. And they all ask you what your interests are and what organizations you have joined, sometimes but not always being careful to exclude religious and ethnic organizations.

They make it quite clear that it is a buyers' market and that the obligation is on you to sell yourself. You sit for hours in

waiting rooms for obviously the time of an unemployed person is worthless. And the interminable tests also serve to let you know your role. For example, one question I had—"If we accept that the first two statements are true, is the third statement (a) true, (b) false, (c) neither true nor false. (1) Most businessmen are progressive. (2) Most businessmen are republicans. (3) Some republicans are progressive." Who are they trying to brainwash with that one?

And one question on a mathematics test for persons working in IBM programming involved the percentage of a staff in this type of work who were women and the number of men to hire to raise the proportion of men on staff. A very encouraging question for women trying this test!

Most offensive to women is the stress on appearance. A secretary, apparently, has to be not only a stenographer, a telephone answering service, a waitress, a listener to all problems, but also a decoration and sex symbol. One ad headed "Cosmetics Go Natural," said in part "... special clothes allowance to ensure that you are beautifully dressed and coiffed." Or how about a secretary: "who understands what makes comptrollers tick."

All is not rosy however for employers. One manager told me that recent graduates lacked initiative and went on to say the schools are so totally regimented that graduates can't make decisions. This is a real contradiction

for bosses—they want initiative on their behalf but conformity in every other area. That manager would be the first to oppose high school students having political clubs in school or giving them some voice in curriculum choice. And would he be shocked if you organized a union in his office or let him know you didn't believe absolutely everything in the dailies?

They also try to create the impression that the work is exciting and worthwhile. We know that most jobs are boring, often useless, like advertising, that we have no say in the job, and that the end product belongs to the boss. They know this too, but they try to hide it in the most crude way. For instance in an ad headed "Day Full of Meaning," they stress the handling of "all boss's important personal and private details." Or perhaps you'd prefer typing for "engineers who are important to Canada's security..." or maybe you'd rather "greet important local people".

But workers aren't going to fall for this—they know that work in this society has no purpose but the making of profit—for those who are already rich. What they now have to realize is that an alternative relationship to work exists—that of socialism—and how we can achieve it. Then job hunting could be the search for an opportunity to make a real contribution towards society, not the selling of one's life for a subsistence living.